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Mis. Circular No. 3.

United States Department of Agriculture,

THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER FLOOD.

[Report No. 2.]

Since the publication, on April 12, of a statement relative to the agricultural interests of the submerged districts of the Mississippi Valley south of Cairo, Ill., the area under water has been considerably extended.

EXTENSION OF FLOODED REGION.

This extension is below Vicksburg, Miss., but on the right, or west, side of the river, and is mainly due to a break, 2,000 feet in width, in the levee at Biggs. The outflow of water at this point has totally submerged four parishes (counties) of Louisiana, and partially overflowed five others, while a break at Lafourche Crossing, in the southern part of the same State, has resulted in the submergence of an additional area of nearly 300 square miles in Lafourche and Terrebonne parishes.

In this newly submerged region there was in 1890 a total population of 82,356, in the proportion of four colored persons to one white.

FARMS, ACREAGE, AND PRODUCTS.

The region contained at the last census 7,747 farms, with a total area of over 1,000,000 acres, of which 420,000 acres were improved. Of this last mentioned area 213,000 acres, or over one-half, were last year devoted to cotton, over 91,000 acres to corn, 6,000 acres to sugar cane, 2,000 acres to hay, and an inconsiderable acreage to other crops.

The total value of these farms, including fences and buildings, but exclusive of their movable equipment, was in 1890 close upon $11,000,000 and the value of the implements and machinery upon them was over $600,000. On January 1 of the present year they contained live stock to the value of one and one-half million dollars, and so lately as the 1st of March last they were estimated to have still on hand about $800,000 worth of the crops of last season. The total value of the farms submerged by the breaks in the levees that have occurred since the 10th instant, with their farm implements, live stock, and crops on hand, is, therefore, close upon $14,000,000.

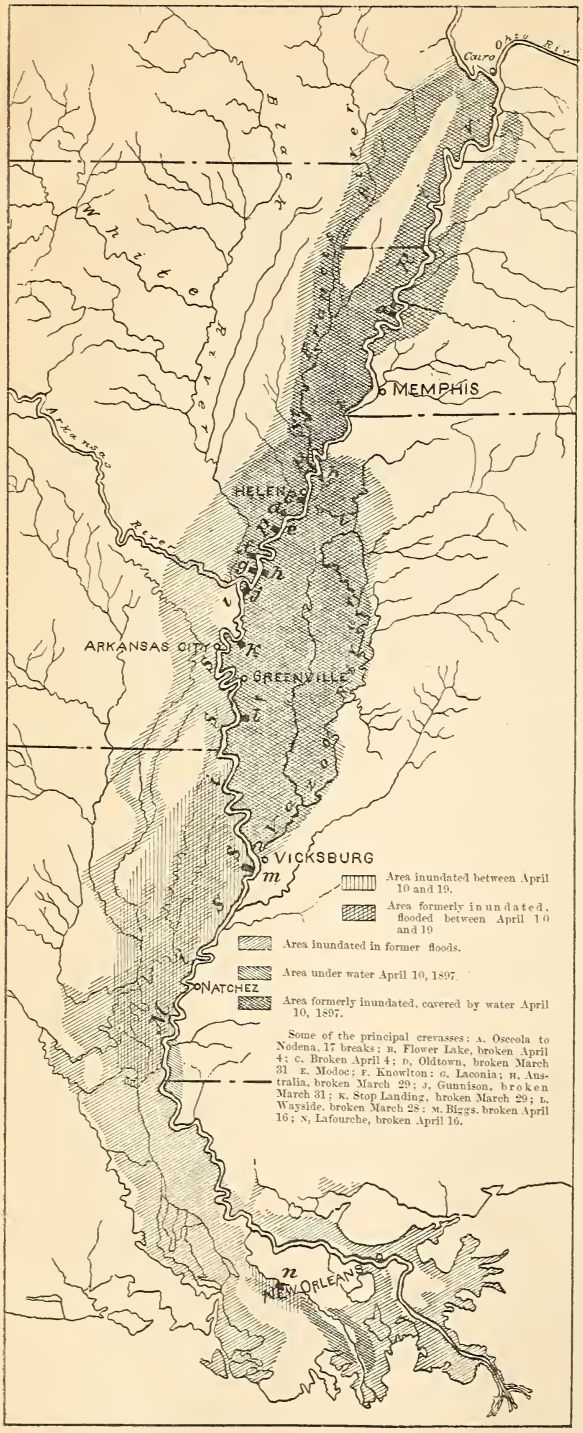
Cairo
Ohio River
Mississippi River
Yazoo River
Arkansas River
White River
Red River
MEMPHIS
HELENA
ARKANSAS CITY
GREENVILLE
VICKSBURG
NATCHEZ
NEW ORLEANS
Area inundated between April 10 and 19.
Area formerly inundated, flooded between April 10 and 19
Area inundated in former floods.
Area under water April 10, 1897.
Area formerly inundated, covered by water April 10, 1897.
Some of the principal crevasses: A, Osceola to Nodena, 17 breaks; B, Flower Lake, broken April 4; C, Broken April 4; D, Oldtown, broken March 31; E, Modoc; F, Knowlton; G, Laconia; H, Australia, broken March 29; J, Gunnison, broken March 31; K, Stop Landing, broken March 29; L, Wayside, broken March 28; M, Biggs, broken April 16; N, Lafourche, broken April 16.

FIG. 1.—Map of the Mississippi River flooded district (prepared under the direction of the Chief of the Weather Bureau).

This region produced last year nearly 100,000 bales of cotton, over 9,000,000 pounds of sugar, over 1,300,000 bushels of corn, besides hay, potatoes, oats, and other minor products, the entire production aggregating a value, even at the low prices that prevailed, of more than four and one quarter million dollars.

TOTAL SUBMERGED AREA AND ITS AGRICULTURAL INTERESTS.

The total area submerged at this date is over 20,000 square miles. It contained at the last census 46,935 farms, with a total area of 4,904,466 acres, nearly one-half of which was improved, and a total population, agricultural and other, of 462,041. If, to the value of its farms, farm buildings, and farm machinery, according to the census of 1890, there be added the value of its live stock on January 1

last ($9,174,636), and of its products of last season still on hand on March 1 last ($4,595,179), the total of $90,176,177 will represent the approximate value of the agricultural property of the submerged region. Among the products of this region last year were 466,056 bales of cotton, worth $16,312,060; 12,525,645 bushels of corn, worth $3,995,278, and 9,033,878 pounds of sugar, worth $271,016, the total production, including minor crops, representing a value of $21,782,-180 on the plantation.

FARM PROPERTY LIABLE TO DAMAGE.

The accompanying tables, prepared under the direction of the Statistician, contain an estimate of the amount of farm property liable to damage in the flooded district of Louisiana.

Table No. 1 shows the estimated population of the flooded district, by color.

Table No. 2 contains the estimated number of farms, the total number of acres, the acres improved, and the acreage under the principal crops in 1896.

Table No. 3 shows the estimated capital invested.

Table No. 4 shows the quantities and values of the principal farm products raised in the flooded territory in 1896.

As the Division of Statistics makes no estimates of crops by counties, the proportions existing between the counties in the flooded districts and the total for the State during the census year have been presumed to be correct for the present period, and have been used in making these estimates.

LOUISIANA.

TABLE NO. 1.—*Population of flooded territory, 1890.*

White	17,275
Colored	65,081
Total population	82,356

TABLE NO. 2.—*Number and acreage of farms submerged April 19, 1897.*

Number of farms	7,747
Number of acres in farms	1,027,265
Number of acres improved	420,488
Acreage under principal crops in 1896:	
Cotton	213,465
Corn	91,507
Sugar	6,000
Hay	2,014
Potatoes	800
Oats	494
Total acreage under principal crops	314,280

TABLE No. 3.—*Capital invested.*

Value of farms and improvements	$10,956,945
Value of implements, etc	611,809
Cost of fertilizers	22,097
Value of live stock on hand January 1, 1897:	
Horses	262,841
Mules	712,994
Milch cows	181,368
Other cattle	158,529
Sheep	4,868
Swine	169,845
Total value of live stock	1,490,445
Value of crops on hand March 1, 1897:	
Corn	191,067
Wheat	-------
Oats	1,680
Cotton	605,190
Total value of crops on hand	797,937
Total capital invested	13,879,233

TABLE No. 4.—*Quantities and values of the principal farm products raised in the flooded territory of Louisiana in 1896.*

		Production.	Value.
Crops of 1896:			
Cotton	bales	96,059	$3,362,165
Corn	bushels	1,326,852	597,083
Sugar	pounds	9,033,878	271,016
Hay	tons	3,827	33,846
Potatoes	bushels	44,000	33,440
Oats	do	4,940	1,680
Total value of crops			4,299,230
Live stock raised in 1896:*		*Number.*	
Horses foaled		771	7,247
Mules foaled		62	930
Calves dropped		6,541	22,772
Lambs dropped		1,237	1,113
Total value of live stock			32,062
Total value of crops and live stock			4,331,292

*As all live stock shown in Table 4 must be less than one year old, the average value is necessarily low.

CHAS. W. DABNEY, JR.,
Special Agent in Charge of Scientific and Statistical Work.

Approved:
JAMES WILSON,
Secretary.

WASHINGTON, D. C., *April 22, 1897.*

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